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Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION GENEVA

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FOR AMBASSADOR RICHARDSON

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLOS

SUBJECT: LOS: WASHINGTON STAR EDITORIAL MARCH 22,

1. EDITORIAL PUBLISHED IN WASHINGTON STAR MARCH 22,
TITLED QUOTE FINAL HAND AT GENEVA? END QUOTE, REPEATED
BELOW.

BEGIN TEXT:

FINAL HAND AT GENEVA?

-- A POKER METAPHOR IS DESCRIPTIVE: THE POT IN THE
GAME RESUMING TUESDAY IN GENEVA, WITH THE CONVENING OF THE
SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UN LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE,
COULD BE AWESOME. AWESOME IN THE MATERIAL AND FINANCIAL
GAIN INVOLVED IN THE YEARS IMMEDITELY AHEAD; AWESOME IN
THE PRECEDENTS THAT COULD BE ESTABLISHED -- BY DEFALT,
IF NO TREATY CAN BE AGREED UPON -- FOR THE APPLICATION
OF TECHNOLOGIES THAT WILL BE A CRUCIAL ELEMENT IN DEFIN-
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ING THE WORLD'S ECONOMIC FUTURE.

-- IT HAS BEEN A DECADE SINCE A UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION,
SCARCELY NOTICED AT THE TIME, PROCLAIMED THAT THE VAST
RICHES STILL UNCLAIMED BENEATH THE OCEANS REPRESENT THE

QUOTE COMMON HERITAGE OF MANKIND. END QUOTE. WITH

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INCREASING VELOCITY, THE ISSU: HAS ASSUM:D THE INTER-
NATIONAL DIMENSIONS APPROPRIATE TO ITS COMPASS: BOTH
IDEOLOGICALLY AND PRACTICALLY. A GREAT DEAL ALREADY
HAS BEEN DONE IN WHAT AMOUNTS TO FASHIONING UTTERLY
NEW INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROCEDURES, A
STRIKING ACCOMPLISHMENT.

-- HOWEVER, THE POKER GAME NOW IS COMING DOWN TO A
CLIMACTIC HAND THAT COULD VALIDATE, OR VITIATE, PREVIOUS
EFFORT. IF THE DEEP-SEA MINING QUESTION CANNOT BE RESOLVED,
IT MAY WELL BE THAT NO TREATY WILL BE FORTHCOMING --
AT LEAST NONE TO WHICH THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER
MAJOR INDUSTRIAL NATIONS WOULD BE PARTIES. WHICH IS TO
SAY, NO TREATY WORTH THE EMBOSSING.

-- ON ONE LEVEL, THE SCRAMBLE TO EXPLOIT THE INCREDIBLE
MINERAL WEALTH BENEATH THE SEAS HAS DIVIDED THE UN
CONFERENCE PARTIES INTO TWO CAMPS -- THE DEVELOPED
NATIONS AND THE THIRD WORLD. U.S. AMBASSADOR ELLIOT
RICHARDSON SAYS THE SEAB;D-MINING ISSUE IN THIS
RESPECT IS QUOTE ESS:NTIALLY ONE OF :CONOMIC PLURALISM
VERSUS STATE CENTRALISM PROJECTED ON A GLOBAL SCALE.
END QUOTE

-- AS THE STAR'S JOHN FIALKA NOTED IN A RECENT SERIES,
QUOTE THE TIME BOMB THAT COULD EXPLODE ALL OF THIS
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WORK DONE PREVIOUSLY) IS A SECTION MOW EMBEDDED IN THE
NEGOTIATED TEXT... THE OUTLINE OF A NEW INSTITUTION,
UNIQUE IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD, CALLED THE QUOTE
INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY END QUOTE. THAT AUTHORITY
WOULD BARGAIN WITH MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND GRANT
LICENSES TO EXPLORE, MINE OR DRILL ON ASSURANCE THAT
THEY WILL SHARE THEIR TECHNOLOGY, REVENUES AND KNOWL-
EDGE WITH THE DEV:LOPING COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD. THAT
SOUNDS NICE. BUT THE AUTHORITY WOULD BE CONTROLLED BY
150 NATIONS, EACH WITH ONE VOTE.

-- THAT OBVIOUSLY WOULD MEAN CONTROL OF THE AUTHORITY
BY SHEER WEIGHT OF NUMBERS BY THE THIRD WORLD NATIONS.
MR. RICHARDSON HAS SAID THAT THE PROPOSAL I QUOTE
FUNDAMENTALLY UNACCEPTABLE END QUOTE AND THAT THE U.S.
MIGHT ABANDON THE ENTIRE TREATY AND GO IT ALONE WITH
READY TECHNOLOGY UNLESS THE POWERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL
BODY ARE SUBSTANTIALLY CURBED. CONTROL OF THE
AUTHORITY, HE SAID, QUOTE WOULD BE FOUNDED ON WHAT IS AT
BEST AN ANOMALOUS PRINCIPLE-- ONE-NATION ONE-VOTE --

WHICH BEARS NO RATIONAL REATIONSHIP EITHER TO THE

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PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY OR TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF
POWER, VALUES AND INTERESTS ... TO ALLOW RESOURCES CON-
STITUTING THE COMMON HERITAGE OF MANKIND TO BE DISPOSED
OF BY A NOSE-COUNT OF NATIONS WOULD BE A BAD PRECED:NT
FOR TH- INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTION BUILDING OF THE FUTURE.
END QUOTE

-- NOT ONLY THAT, BUT THE NOTION WOULD BE RUN OUT OF
TOWN ON A RAIL BY A UNITED STATES SENATE PRESENTED WITH
A TREATY EMBODYING IT.

-- THE TR:ATY TEXT THAT MR. RICHARDSON HAD ANTICIPATED
ON THE GENEVA TABLE REPRESENTED A SOFTENING OF THAT
ONE-NATION ONE-VOTE POWER AND WOULD HAVE GIV:N INDUSTRIAL
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NATIONS GREAT:R CONTROL OVER TECHNOLOGY AND ITS US-.
HOWEVER, MR. RICHARDSON APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN OUTFLANKED
IN THE NEGOTIATING MACHINATIONS: THE TEXT FORMALLY
BEFORE THE DELEGATES IN GENEVA RETAINS THE ALL-POWERFUL
-- AND UNACCEPTABLE -- SEABED AUTHORITY WITH ITS
STRONG BACKING FROM THE THIRD WORLD NATIONS REPRESENTED
BY THE GROUP OF 77.

-- THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN SUPERFLUOUS HAD MR. RICHARDSON
BEEN ABLE TO EMBARK FOR GENEVA WITH A DEFIED U.S.
POLICY IN HIS POCKET. AS MR. FIALKA REPORTED: QUOTE
ACCORDING TO THE SAME PLAN, CONGRESS WAS SUPPOSED TO
BACK HIM WITH A BILL THAT WOULD GIVE THE U.S. PARTNERS
IN FOUR INTERNATIONAL MINING CONSORTIUMS THE AUTHORITY
TO BEGIN EXPLORATION AND MINING OPERATIONS, PROVIDED
THAT THEY PAID A SMALL PERCENTAG: OF THEIR PROFITS INTO
AN ESCROW ACCOUNT FOR THE WORLD'S DEVELOPING NATIONS
END QUOTE -- MONEY WHICH, IF AN ACCEPTABLE TREATY WERE
FASHIONED, WOULD GO TO THE INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITY.
THAT BLEW UP BECAUSE OF AN QUOTE ELABORATE SERIES END
QUOTE OF DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN MR. RICHARDSON AND FOUR
INVOLVED CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

-- SO WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE US AT G:N"VA NEXT WEEK?

-- TO RETURN TO THE POKER METAPHOR, MR. RICHARDSON
MAY BE IN THE POSITION OF HAVING TO CHECK WHEN IT IS
HIS TIME TO BET, HOPING THE OPPONENTS WILL REALIZE THAT
IF THEY KEEP RAISING, THE U.S. WILL NOT BE AROUND WHEN
A TREATY VOTE IS TAKEN AT THE CONFERENCE -- AND THE

THIRD WORLD WILL HAVE RAKED IN AN ILLUSORY POT.

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-- IT WILL BE A FASCINATING HAND TO WATCH.

END TEXT. VANCE

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